2:Lowie E-4 (no date) 1946 SP8 Bororo SP8

resonators, as well as "polyglobular" trumpets consisting of three or four gourds joined with wax; stopless flutes; and the bull-roarer. Drums that now occur are suspect of White derivation.

Dances.—Among the dances may be mentioned that preceding battle, in which the performers bend their knees in position and periodically shout as a chief shakes the gourd rattle. In the *Western Bororo* Jaguar dance, the hunter of a slain jaguar plays the part of the beast, being supposedly possessed by its soul; he wears the skin described above (pl. 89), also necklaces of jaguar claws and teeth, and executes furious leaps while the attending women wail. The object of the performance is to appease the spirit of the animal.

Beverages.—Besides their nut gruel, the *Bororo* drink palm wine: the acuri tree is tapped for its sap, which is allowed to drop into pots or mortars and is quaffed from bamboo vessels. This beverage is drunk by incipient medicine men.

RELIGION AND SHAMANISM

Supernaturalism rests on two systems of belief with distinct and rival functionaries.

(1) There are evil spirits who are the souls of dead baare (plural of bari; see below) or never were anthropomorphic; they normally dwell in the sky, but are able to visit the earth, where they are known as bope, maeréboe, or waikuru. They cause falling stars and illness, can predict future events, but above all claim the prerogative as to various kinds of food, which unauthorized mortals consume under pain of sickness and death. The bope possesses a bari and eats the dishes in question with the bari's mouth. These spirits also appear in dreams and reveal the future, but they take no interest in the social life of the Indians and do not in any significant way figure in any myth.

A bari becomes such through visitations of a bope. He must scrupulously observe the rules laid down to him on pain of loss of power and catching an incurable disease. However, the bope may render him invulnerable and give him the power to hunt game in the guise of a jaguar. The bari may inflict disease and death, but also cures and confers other benefits on the tribe. A client will offer him a cigar, whereupon the shaman calls on the bope, a number of whom led by a spokesman then possess him. In doctoring, the bari smokes the cigar, then the spokesman of the spirits asks why they have been called. One present explains, then the doctor sucks the afflicted parts, expectorating the putative cause, e. g., a beetle, which he scans, announcing his prognosis. Certain feminine diseases, however, he must not attempt treating lest he impair his supernatural powers. Most important of the bari's functions is the "consecration" of the food reserved to the bope—a procedure that ensures to himself the choicest morsels.

128 view with regard to procreation and birth, and the socially recognized union of man and women.

844 585 We may begin by noting some common features in the Bororo attitudes toward birth and marriage. Though these may be very important events in the life of one individual or family, the society at large ignores them. There is much excitement going on in the families involved, but these two changes of status (if birth may be called such for the new born child) do not affect the rest of the society. Comparative analysis of the Bororo ceremonies reveals that whenever there is an appeal to, or invocation of, spiritual beings the ceremony will be preceded and followed by singing. Outside of this religious context the Bororo do not sing. The only exception to this is that the Bororo sometimes sing Brazilian songs when they are drunk. In this respect birth and marriage are not religious ceremonies—no spirits are invoked, no songs sung. This contrasts sharply with the other changes of status which are considered significant by the Bororo viz., naming, initiation, and death. In anticipation of a more exhaustive discussion, we may say that the newborn child is not considered a member of the society until it gets its name, and marriage is looked upon as a continuation of an alliance arrangement which was established in mythical time by other cultural exchanges, e.g., those of ceremonies and goods, rather than by the exchange of women and men.

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back to the village. Its claws and teeth are pried loose and made into ornaments to be kept as mementos by the close kin of the deceased. The hunter is rewarded with a necklace made of shells and nuts, an elaborately decorated bow, and arrows. The animal is skinned and the inner surface of the pelt is decorated with black paint specially prepared by the shaman. This is presented to the relatives of the deceased in a series of rituals that involve singing and dancing.

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The night of the kill, one of the village leaders conducts a dance to the accompaniment of songs addressed to the spirit of the jaguar. With the jaguar hide on his shoulders, a chief or a shaman leads the ritual intended to appease the dead jaguar, while the people of the village dance. Men, women, and children all perform this very important ritual, which continues far into the night. At first many people

[text continues on p. 45-A]

[p. 44-B]

join in the dance, which consists of simple, rhythmical steps or hops. As the dancers become tired, they drop out of line one by one, and eventually the shaman may be left dancing alone.

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IN preparation for the actual burial festivities, the Bororo ornament themselves elaborately and with meticulous care. They paint their faces and bodies with a variety of fantastic designs in different colors, and may plaster their hair with the red urucú paint. Some wear skirts, capes, and head wreaths made from palm leaves. Hair that was torn out in mourning is spun into cords that are braided and wound around the head in the fashion of a turban. Other striking decorations are chest ornaments made from the claws of the giant armadillo; bird beaks worn as pendants; necklaces of jaguar teeth; chaplets made of a beautiful local flower that resembles our morning glory; and enormous "sunburst crown" feather headdresses, which sometimes incorporate the tail feathers of as many as thirty macaws. These spectacular headdresses are highly prized by the Bororo, because macaws are now scarce in their forests. They will part with one to an outsider only in exchange for a gun.

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One of the highlights of the Bororo funeral ceremony is the impersonation of mythical beasts by men dressed in various costumes and performing imitative dances. Two such creatures inspect the corpse about two weeks after its interment in the plaza. Disguised with leaves of the buriti palm, they circle the grave several times. Finally they stop and open it to check the state of the body's decomposition. Their decision is known in advance: the flesh has not yet decayed enough to be removed from the bones. The grave is closed, and the festivities continue.

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ANOTHER mythical creature is represented by a man whose body is painted white with clay, and who wears feathers in his nose. This beast impersonator runs again and again around the spot where the corpse is buried, trying to call the dead person's soul out of the grave. During this performance, other men in the group shake split bamboo poles, producing a sharp clapping sound.

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Still another beast impersonator emerges from behind the huts, and rushing across the plaza toward the grave, beats it with a long stick in a

[p. 45-A] [text continues on p. 45-C]

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place in the thoughts and doings of the Bororó as it does in the minds of all the peoples of the earth. Elucidating further, Prof. O. T. Mason says that, "In a general sense, religion is the sum of what is thought or believed about a spirit world and what is done in consequence of such thinking. What is thought about such a world constitutes *creed*, what is done or what a people does under its inspiration constitutes the *cult*. The *creed* and the *cult* together form the religion of any individual or people."

The religion of the Bororó is expressed chiefly by an elaborate system of diabolical rites and ceremonies for the placation of disembodied souls, or spirits, which they call *bopi*—demons; and a funeral is the occasion for the greatest display of the savage ritual, or *cult*. It is a great *musical* pandemonium, savage dirge, or hell's concert; or a sort of wild man's opera or tragic play, enacted by a primitive male quartette, mixed chorus and orchestra, and lasts several days and nights, first with the body present, and a week later, with the bones present.

When a member of the tribe becomes so ill that the family begins to fear for his life, one of the tribal priests, or sorcerers, is summoned to his hut where he lies naked on a palm-leaf mat spread upon the ground, to declare whether he will live or die. This primitive ecclesiastic may think, inspired with wicked cunning, that the sick one will die naturally within a certain number of days. Or, he may hold a grudge against the stricken man, and may consider this a good opportunity to balance accounts. So, in announcing to the family the number of days the patient will live, he mentally resolves that if death should not occur naturally at the time he shall name, he will see to it that it occurs, nevertheless, in some other way. Or, again, he may feel that life in the village has long been very dull and monotonous, and that there is immediate and urgent need of a social function or festival of some kind; and what could be more entertaining to the savage public than a good funeral *bakororó!* In this case, also, he will see to it that the victim dies at the time he indicates. In any event, he will take steps to have his predictions "come true" to the letter, in

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our hut, and immediately thereafter a horde of excited and frightened savages swarmed in upon us. The cause of their alarm was quickly explained to us: One of their number had imagined he saw the forms of strange men moving about mysteriously in the jungle near the village, which was interpreted by some of his fellows to mean that the soldiers were coming to attack and carry them away. At another time, apparitions of the dead were thought to have been seen; so the following day the natives solemnly and mysteriously prepared the *roarerrs* in order to frighten away the threatening evil.

It is partly, or chiefly, to pacify departed souls by honoring them and giving them a good send off, that the elaborate funeral ceremonies already described, occur. And the fact that nearly all the rites and ceremonies of the Bororó are observed for the pacification of demons is the reason why the ritual is so hideous and diabolical. Men whose gods are devils only, can have nothing but a devilish ceremonial.

As already stated, the Bororó, like the Karayá, entertain an anamistic conception of the world. They do not appear to have any idea of a good spirit, or good spirits. Attempting to translate the word God into their language, or to communicate to them in a small degree the thought that this word stands for, we had to make use of the words, *Bopi camahina pêmêgâre iruducâre*, which is literally, Spirit, greatest, good, without equal. But this is quite unsuitable for a permanent translation and a word for God would have to be transliterated, or a new word coined.

Mingling with the Bororó, one somehow gets the impression that *perhaps they* once had a conception of a good spirit. But, as the good spirits never did them any harm, nor threatened them with evil, while numerous evil spirits are constantly menacing them, they came naturally to devote so much attention to the latter that they long ago forgot all about the former. Thus they have degenerated in mind and heart, it would seem, with the result that in the whole outward expression of their lives, they have retrograded from a higher to a lower social and moral state.

[764] daughter depending upon which relative died,
775 and once every year the ghost returns and enters
the body of the person who did the burying and
dances in the *arduato*. But if the deceased has
●[782] no relatives who can offer the gravedigger gifts,
then the ghost becomes angry and does harm.
He makes people sick, breaks pots, and takes the
form of a jaguar or a snake and kills people.
Eventually, however, ghosts of this kind die.

796 Thus the important religious rite of the Umotina
is the *arduato*, which is given every year at the
775 beginning of the rainy season. Large quantities
[782] of fish, meat, and manioc cake are prepared by
the family heads who have ghosts to whom they
must make offerings. The ghosts are impersonated by the gravediggers dressed for the occasion.
There appears to be four classes of spirits: the
pódopódo or ghosts of men who have living relatives; the *bakóre* or male ghosts who have no
relatives but must be appeased during the *arduato*;
and the *akakóno* and the *katóri* who are the female
correspondents of the above-mentioned male
292 spirits. The *pódopódo* and *akakóno* dancers wear
796 long mantles made from buriti leaves, which reach
from the shoulders to the ground. They wear
775 macaw feather headdresses, glue feathers above
their eyes, and pull their hair over their faces and
fasten it to their beards. The *bakóre* mantle is
the same as that of the *pódopódo* but it is tied
around the waist, the dancer wearing a mask made
from buriti bark. The *katóri* dancer wears a
costume made by suspending a buriti leaf mantle
from a large hoop about 3 or 4 feet in diameter.
A mask made from a net is placed on top of the
hoop. The dancer then gets underneath and
holds the hoop with his hands while dancing.

796 While the dancers are performing at night the
534 women sing and the men play the flutes (*kóto*) and
533 shake gourd rattles. The flute is about 3 feet in
length and is made from taquara. It is played
from the side like a clarinet.

796 The givers of the *arduato* are those men who have
lost relatives since the *arduato* the year before.
These men usually combine in collecting the food
and building a temporary house in which the
dancers dress for the ceremony. When the
ceremony is over the dancers give their mantles
to the givers of the feast, who use them for making
mats.

[p. 109 (B)]